

Reasons for Allowance

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art of record does not teach or suggest a mask having patterns and operating by reflection lithography with a reflective structure, with a protective means contacting the reflective structure and transparent to the said wavelength, and where the protective means form a structure having a membrane connected by pillars on the front face of the reflective structure, and the pillars contacting at least one of the patterns. Also the prior art of record does not teach where the protective means form a structure formed from a material placed on the front face of the reflective structure and defining channels making it possible to reduce the density of the material, and at least on of the patterns being accessible to the channels. The prior art of record does not teach or suggest the protective means form a structure composed of nanotubes oriented to extend along a selected direction substantially normal to the front face of the reflective structure, the nanotubes contacting at least one of the patterns.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan Jelsma whose telephone number is (571)270-

5127. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Huff can be reached on (571)272-1385. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Mark F. Huff/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1795

JGJ